

Feb 15 2006 - Republicans Refuse Responsibility to Oversee Legality of NSA Wiretapping Activities

Republicans Refuse Responsibility to Oversee Legality of NSA Wiretapping Activities

Resolution of Inquiry Authored by Rep. Slaughter Rejected by Judiciary Committee

Washington, DC - The House Judiciary Committee today rejected a Resolution of Inquiry authored by Rep. Louise M. Slaughter (D-NY-28), Ranking Member of the House Rules Committee, and in so doing, once again abdicated its responsibility to oversee the Bush Administration's potentially illegal wiretapping activities.

"Congress is rejecting its Constitutionally mandated responsibility to oversee the actions of the President, and is choosing instead to make itself irrelevant," Rep. Slaughter said. "The Bush Administration has provided us with a false choice. The notion that we have to choose between our national security and our civil liberties is an indefensible and dangerous precedent to set for this nation. We can, and must, have both."

"As the world's greatest democracy, we must defend our citizens from outside threats to their security. But we must also defend their liberties from internal attack," Rep. Slaughter continued. "We must show the world that no one is above the law - not even the President of the United States."

The resolution, H.Res.644, requested the public release of all government documents related to the recently revealed domestic surveillance programs being carried out by the National Security Agency. Directed to President Bush and Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, the bill further called for all relevant documents to be turned over to the House of Representatives within fourteen days of the adoption of the resolution.

The complete text of Rep. Slaughter's resolution can be found below:

H.RES.644

Requesting the President and directing the Attorney General to transmit to the House of Representatives not later than 14 days after the date of the adoption of this resolution documents... (Introduced in House)

HRES 644 IH

109th CONGRESS

1st Session

H. RES. 644

Requesting the President and directing the Attorney General to transmit to the House of Representatives not later than 14 days after the date of the adoption of this resolution documents in the possession of those officials relating to the authorization of electronic surveillance of citizens of the United States without court approved warrants.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

December 22, 2005

Ms. SLAUGHTER submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

RESOLUTION

Requesting the President and directing the Attorney General to transmit to the House of Representatives not later than 14 days after the date of the adoption of this resolution documents in the possession of those officials relating to the authorization of electronic surveillance of citizens of the United States without court approved warrants.

Resolved, That the President is requested and the Attorney General is directed to transmit to the House of Representatives not later than 14 days after the date of the adoption of this resolution all documents in the possession of the President and the Attorney General relating to the authorization of electronic surveillance of United States persons (as such terms are defined in section 101 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 (50 U.S.C. 1801)) conducted without warrants approved by a court of the United States and any instructions for handling such documents, including--

(1) all records setting forth or discussing policies, procedures, or guidelines regarding the authorization by the President or other officials of the Federal Government of electronic surveillance of United States persons without court approved warrants;

(2) all records pertaining to the Constitutional prohibition on unreasonable searches as it relates to the authority to conduct electronic surveillance of United States persons without a court approved warrant;

(3) all records pertaining to the authority to conduct electronic surveillance of United States persons without court approved warrants under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978;

(4) all records relating to the authorization of electronic surveillance of United States persons by an official of the Federal Government other than the President without a court approved warrant;

(5) all records of communication between the President or other officials of the Federal Government and Congress, or a member or committee of Congress, pertaining to the authorization of electronic surveillance of United States persons without court approved warrants;

(6) all records indicating or discussing the number of United States persons for which electronic surveillance was authorized without a court approved warrant;

(7) all records indicating or discussing the number of citizens of the United States for which electronic surveillance was authorized without a court approved warrant;

(8) all records indicating or discussing the budget or cost of carrying out electronic surveillance of United States persons without court approved warrants; and

(9) all records indicating or discussing the number of staff involved in the authorization or execution of electronic surveillance of United States persons without court approved warrants